

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FORM**

NR Eligible: yes ☐  
no ☒

Property Name: Preston House Inventory Number: HA-2176

Address: 1621 Old Joppa Road Historic district: ☐ yes ☒ no

City: Joppa Zip Code: 21085 County: Harford

USGS Quadrangle(s): Edgewood

Property Owner: Thomas and Charlene Watchinsky Tax Account ID Number: 101951

Tax Map Parcel Number(s): 88 Tax Map Number: 64

Project: Section 200: I-95, North of MD 43 to North of MD 22 Agency: Maryland Transportation Authority

Agency Prepared By: A.D. Marble & Company

Preparer's Name: Emma Young Date Prepared: 9/27/2006

Documentation is presented in: Harford County Office of Land Records, Bel Air, Maryland.

Preparer's Eligibility Recommendation: ☐ Eligibility recommended ☒ Eligibility not recommended

Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D Considerations: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

*Complete if the property is a contributing or non-contributing resource to a NR district/property:*

Name of the District/Property: \_\_\_\_\_

Inventory Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Eligible: ☐ yes ☐ no Listed: ☐ yes ☐ no

Site visit by MHT Staff ☐ yes ☒ no Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Description of Property and Justification: *(Please attach map and photo)*

**Architectural Description:**

The Preston House, located at 1621 Old Joppa Road, Joppa, Harford County, Maryland, is a two-story, circa-1928, stucco, American-Foursquare dwelling situated on the east side of Old Joppa Road. The symmetrical façade faces west towards the road. A hipped roof, sheathed in asphalt shingles, caps the dwelling. A two-bay, hipped-roof dormer is centrally located on the west (front) elevation. A brick interior chimney protrudes from the center of the roof ridge. The dwelling is clad in stucco and sits atop a concrete block foundation. A one-story, vinyl-clad, shed-roof addition extends from the east (rear) elevation.

The front elevation measures three bays wide and is laid out in a window-window-door pattern. A one-story, full-width, screened-in porch, located on the west (front) elevation, conceals the main entry into the dwelling. Vinyl siding covers the posts and balustrade of the porch, which is capped by a hipped roof. Three, poured concrete steps provide access to the porch. Three, evenly spaced, one-over-one light, double-hung sash, aluminum windows light the second story. Louvered wooden shutters flank the windows. Paired, four-over-one light, double-hung sash, wooden windows light the hipped roof dormer.

The main block's south elevation measures two bays wide. A single, six-light, fixed-sash, wood window and paired, one-over-one

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**MHT Comments:**

Jim Faulkner  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

7/2/07  
Date

B. Kuntz  
Reviewer, National Register Program

7/9/07  
Date

200702174

light, double-hung sash, aluminum windows light the first story. Two, one-over-one light, double-hung sash, aluminum windows light the second story. Wood-plank bulkhead doors at the foundation provide access to the basement. A faux, multi-light, vinyl-clad window lights the south elevation of the rear addition.

A wood deck located on the east (rear) elevation suggests that a secondary entrance into the dwelling is located on that elevation. This elevation was not accessible during the field investigation. The dwelling's northern elevation also was not accessible; although, a one-story, vinyl-clad addition appears to extend from the elevation's northwestern corner. This addition appears to be lit by faux multi-light, double-hung sash, aluminum-clad windows. Overall, the dwelling, which sits upon a 1.378-acre tract, stands in good condition.

A paved asphalt driveway is located to the south of the dwelling. Mature deciduous and evergreen trees dot the grass lawn that surrounds the dwelling. A dense line of evergreen trees serves as the eastern border to the property.

#### Historical Narrative:

By a deed dated December 8, 1898, Frank P. Brazier purchased three tracts of land, portions of which were known as "Onion's Inheritance," "Good Endeavor," and "Homer Resurveyed." Together, these three tracts of land measured 51.75 acres (Harford County Land Record Liber 95, Folio 117). In March 1917, "in consideration of his natural love and affection" Frank P. Brazier conveyed to his daughter, Alberta B. Preston, the tract or parcel of land measuring 51.75 acres (Harford County Land Record Liber 155, Folio 156). It is unclear if the American Foursquare dwelling was on the property at the time of Brazier's conveyance to his daughter, although Harford County Tax Assessment data suggests a circa 1928 construction date. The dwelling was likely constructed sometime prior to 1928, possibly after Brazier's conveyance to the Prestons.

Alberta B. Preston retained the property until her death in 1973 (recited in Harford County Land Record Liber 1079, Folio 747). Preston's estate settled five years later, when her administrator sold a 1.43-acre lot encompassing the present-day dwelling to Thomas and Charlene Watchinsky (Harford County Land Record Liber 1079, Folio 747). The Watchinskys retain the property today.

#### American Foursquare (1900-1930)

American-Foursquare houses were commonly constructed as farmhouses or tenant-farmer residences for many small-scale farms throughout Maryland during the first quarter of the twentieth century. American Foursquares were also an early suburban house form. Essentially a subtype of the Prairie style of building, American Foursquares commonly have hipped or pyramidal roofs, and are symmetrical, although entrances, which are located on the front facades, may be off center. This was one of the earliest forms of Prairie-style architecture and was the most common vernacular version (McAlester and McAlester 2002: 439).

#### Statement of Significance:

The Preston House located at 1621 Old Joppa Road is not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The American-Foursquare style is a common architectural form found throughout the region and state. The dwelling does not retain sufficient integrity to deem it eligible for listing in the National Register.

The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:

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Eligibility recommended \_\_\_\_\_

Eligibility not recommended \_\_\_\_\_

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MHT Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Reviewer, National Register Program

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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- A. that are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or  
B. that are associated with the lives of significant persons in our past;  
C. that embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or  
D. that have yielded or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

The Preston House is not associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of history. Therefore, the property is not eligible under Criterion A.

The Preston House is not eligible under Criterion B, as it has no known association with individuals of historical importance.

The Preston House, while it exhibits the characteristics of the American-Foursquare style, lacks the architectural distinctiveness necessary to qualify it for listing in the National Register under Criterion C. The dwelling does not embody the distinctive characteristics of a period or method of construction. The dwelling does not represent the work of a master nor does it possess high artistic values. Therefore, the dwelling is not eligible under Criterion C.

The property was not evaluated under Criterion D as part of the current investigation.

**Integrity:**

The Preston House contains modern alterations and additions that compromise integrity of materials, workmanship, and design. The dwelling has undergone numerous modifications, including the application of vinyl siding on the full-width porch, installation of replacement windows, and the construction of vinyl-clad additions. The dwelling retains integrity of setting and location. However, the lack of integrity of materials, workmanship, and design detract from the property's integrity of association or feeling.

**References:**

Harford County Office of Land Records, Bel Air, Maryland  
1898 Land Record Liber 95, Folio 117

1917 Land Record Liber 155, Folio 156

1978 Land Record Liber 1079, Folio 747

Lanier, Gabrielle and Bernard L. Herman

1997 Everyday Architecture in the Mid-Atlantic. Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore, Maryland.

McAlester, Virginia and Lee

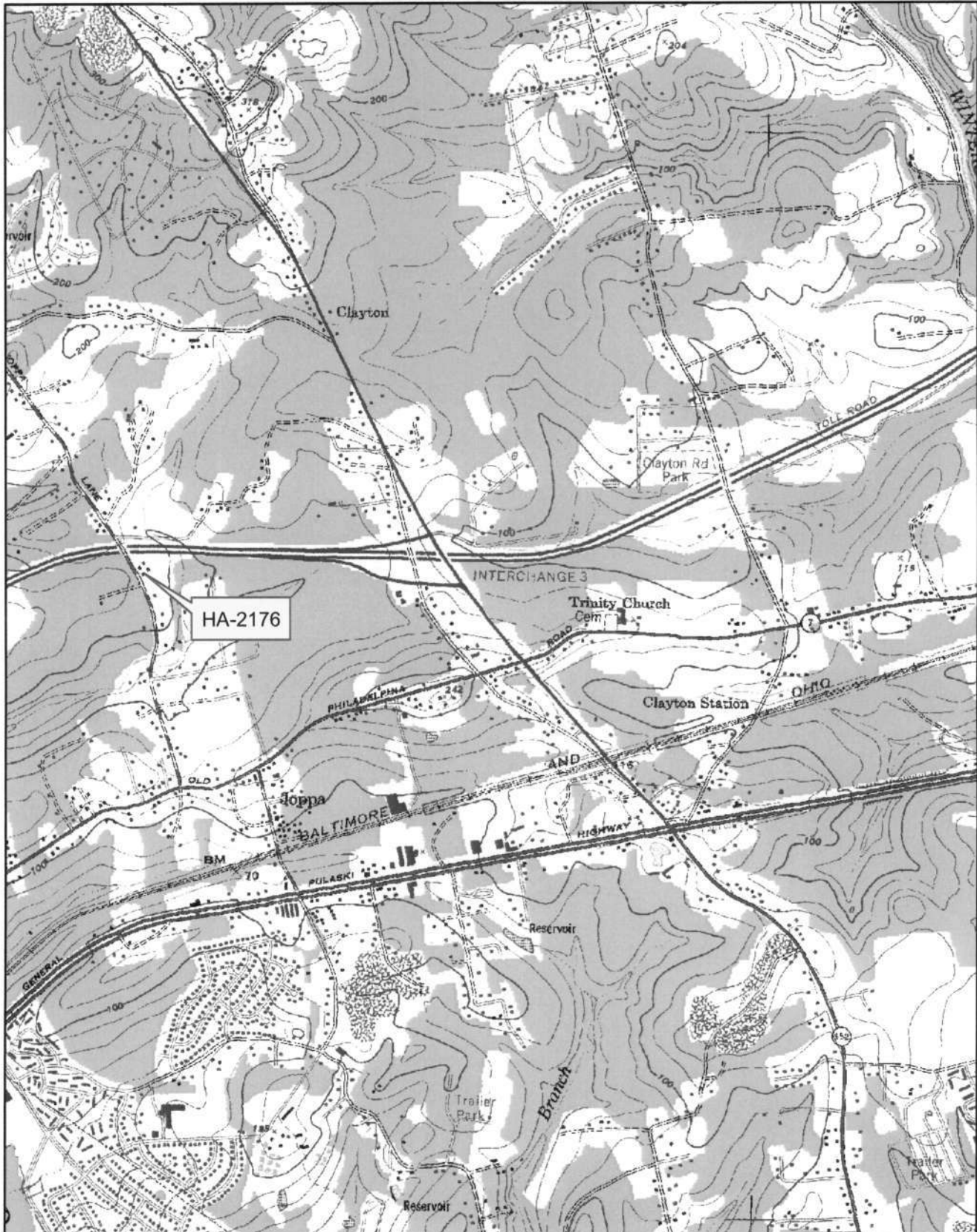
2002 A Field Guide to American Houses. Alfred A. Knopf: New York, New York.

National Park Service (NPS)

1997a National Register Bulletin: How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation. United States Department of the Interior: Washington DC.

**MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST REVIEW****Eligibility recommended** \_\_\_\_\_**Eligibility not recommended** \_\_\_\_\_**Criteria:**    \_\_\_ A    \_\_\_ B    \_\_\_ C    \_\_\_ D    **Considerations:**    \_\_\_ A    \_\_\_ B    \_\_\_ C    \_\_\_ D    \_\_\_ E    \_\_\_ F    \_\_\_ G**MHT Comments:**\_\_\_\_\_  
**Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services**\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**\_\_\_\_\_  
**Reviewer, National Register Program**\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

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HA-2176  
1621 Old Joppa Road, Harford County



0 0.1 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8  
Miles



1:24,000  
Source: Edgewood USGS 9.5"  
Topo Quadrangle (1985)



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Preston House

Harford County, Maryland

E. YOUNG

08.2006

MD SHPD

South & west elevations, view to northeast

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